Little Diplomats

Special Correspondence

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 10, 1914.

TO the passing citizen, the dwellers in that strange and cosmopolitan little world known in Washington city as the diplomatic corps seem very far removed from ordinary human beings. One is not apt to think of Ambassador This or Minister That as having any everyday life.

They seem not like real folks, but like characters out of a book; not as concrete creatures, but as the sublimated principles of international law, moving with chin up-tilted, in solemn state along formal avenues of an existence laid out by ancient and high-born precedent, breathing a thinner air, if they breathe at all, and far, very far, above the simple and petty details that make up the life and happiness of Smith and Jones.

* * *

Least of all can one imagine the female contingent of this diplomatic world as an everyday woman, with all a woman's little frailties and all her many delicious little affections; rather she seems but a stately supplement fitted only to adorn her lord's diplomatic magnificence and glory at some high function.

And children! To the common mortal, the idea of diplomats with children—with children of their very own that they cherish, much less children that they love and spoil and grow ridiculously foolish over—seems as incongruous as omnipotent Jove playing ride-a-cock-horse with a bouncing baby on the heights of Olympus.

And yet chidren and babies, with all the simple charm of childhood and babyhood, are of far more concern to these mothers and fathers of the international world than all the perplexities of empire that furrow the brows of kings and presidents and parliaments. It's an even chance that the ill-concealed frown on the brow of the high-titled host at the diplomatic dinner is caused less by the latest grave news from Mexico or the Balkans or the home court than by the measles that has lately assailed his little son.

Nor is the nervousness of the wife of the minister who is the guest of honor due to the threatened revolution at home or the treaty that may go wrong.

* * *

There seems, in fact, to be a closer union between the children of diplomats and their parents than among the average family, due to the fact that they are so much more dependent upon one another. Gild and color the situation with all the high lights of glory and honor that you will, the fact remains that the diplomat is, to a certain extent, an exile. And to the little ones this means that all the joys of life must be found within the home circle. Naturally this greater dependency begets a greater expression of affection from the already fond parents.

Nor, as popular belief fallaciously runs in the case of wealthy and titled folks, do these diplomats turn over the care and rearing of their little ones to nurse or governess. These are engaged, it is true, but it is strictly to assist. It is the parents who minister to them, guide them, correct them and, and—well, what if they do sometimes? Babies are made to spoil!

While none worships at the shrine of the cradle with more divine adoration than they, these diplomats are most attentive to the education of their offspring. Education and, when necessary, discipline are a religion with them. Their children are early put to their school tasks, and their rearing in this respect would be an excellent model for the native parent. Especially are they taught languages—an essential in every phase of diplomatic life, whether public or private. Hence most of the little diplomats soon master one or more foreign tongues.

The general result is that the junior section of the diplomatic world of Washington can show as fine a lot of children as can be collected anywhere on the globe. Mentally and physically they take first rank.

* * *

Two beautiful little children enliven the stately British embassy—Bettie and Anthony, the children of Ambassador Sir Cecil Arthur and Lady Florence Spring-Rice. Bettie—who is simple Bettie, mind you, and not yet formal Elizabeth—is eight years old. Yet, for all her youth, she has seen more of the world than many a hoary globe-trotter.

Persia, Sweden, Russia and other foreign countries she has not only visited, but has also set up her own private establishment in all of them. For where Bettie goes there must go her dolls and toys, as dear to her as ever were his household gods to Greek or Roman. And, ere her father has set up his diplomatic headquarters in a new land, Bettie has founded her establishment and safely set up her treasures in their new home. Little Bettie finds the genial outdoors of Washington most pleasant to her English tastes after the heat of Persia and the rigors of Russian winters.

Little Anthony is a sturdy Briton of five years, still occupied with the toys of the British boy. From the enthusiasm with which their mother enters into their childish interests, one is tempted to class her as a big sister. Yet both she and the ambassador devote themselves most diligently to the education of these scions of British nobility; not a factor that goes to make the high-born British child is neglected.

Little Jose Avalos represents the junior department of the Mexican embassy. He is a bright little two-year-old, the son of the military attache, Don Jose and Mme. Avalos. The fact that the two countries are quarreling makes not one whit difference to young Jose. He has his hands full ruling over the Avalos household, where he is absolute czar.

Sometimes, however, the family rises in revolt against his tyranny and the young czar is disciplined. In such case the deposed autocrat shows his diplomacy. Getting him a stout strap, he rushes about the apartment, seeking an imaginary bad boy, whom he calls "Torcuta." Finding him at last, he chases him out of the room, whereupon he throws up his hands and cries joyfully: "There, he is gone!" Thus is Jose purged of his sins.

* * *

But, when occasion demands, Jose can be as obedient as any soldier. He recently attended a children's party, accompanied by his nurse, who cautioned him against soiling his pretty dress. When the refreshments were passed, little Jose, though looking with longing eyes upon the luscious viands, sturdily refused to touch even a single cake. On his return home his mother, when told of his conduct by the nurse, asked him why he had refused even the ice cream, of which he was extremely fond.

"I was afraid of soiling my pretty dress!" was his characteristic reply.

Despite his youth, Jose is very literary. He prefers the comic supplement, Snookums, the baby of the Newly-Weds, being his favorite character in fiction. Gazing philosophically upon a certain adventure of Snookums one Sunday, he remarked after sage deliberation: "Well, mamma, I think Snookums' daddy was bad, too."

Surely the great war lord of Germany is proud to be represented among the child diplomats of Washington by little Manfred Portales, grandson of the German ambassador and Countess von Bernstorff, just a year and a half old and the cunningist little Cupid whose sunny curls and laughing blue eyes ever charmed a grandfather's heart.

Although his father and mother, Count and Countess Portales, are now stationed at The Hague, little Manfred spends much time in Washington and is known as the official legation baby. Little Manfred's worldly experience has absolutely convinced him of one fact—that is, that everything in the heavens and earth and the waters beneath was made by his father and his grandfather. This, with him, is a mathematical certainty that brooks no dispute.

* * *

Little Rene Ballivian is the practical head of the Bolivian legation. He is the son of Senor Don Manuel Ballivian, secretary of the legation, and grandson of the minister, Senor Don Ignacio Calderon. He is also great-grandson of Senor Calderon, who was formerly president of Bolivia. Though but five years of age, little Rene is a full-fledged soldier and as imbued with the martial spirit as was Napoleon at Austerlitz.

Although we are at peace with Bolivia, and Bolivia is at peace with the world, Rene, with foresight creditable in a young diplomat, has thoroughly organized not only his own household, but also the whole Bolivian legation, upon a military basis. Upon each of the family and officials he has bestowed a military title, and by these he invariably addresses them.

Minister Calderon is "the general," his father is "the captain," his mother is "lieutenant" and his little sister Beatrice is a tiny "major." He himself is also known as "the lieutenant" and sturdily refuses to be addressed by any other title. No "Tootles" or "Sweetness" for Rene; it's "the lieutenant" or nothing at all. With notable foresight he has designated his nurse as "the paymaster," she thus being in charge of the cookies and being subject to the orders of the "lieutenant."

And, with a consistency remarkable in so young a child, he never gives up this pleasant little fiction of his. When, recently, some strange ladies met him upon the street and addressed him as a "little boy," he indignantly repudiated the name. "I am not a little boy," he replied. "I am a lieutenant!"

Little Rene keeps his military organization up to the mark. If the legation is ever attacked, no matter whether by night or day, it will be found upon an effective war footing, with Rene in alert command.

His little sister, Beatrice, nearly three years of age, is a pretty little girl of the Spanish type. She looks upon her brother as the perfection of all childish virtues.

The Russian embassy is represented in the child world by Sornia and Kyra Golejevski, daughters of the military attache, Col. Nicolni Golejevski and Mme. Golejevski, the daughter of Sir Walter and Lady Grove of Sedghill manor, Wiltshire, England. Sornia is eighteen months old, while Kyra is but six months of age. Much of their time is spent in England, where they visit at the home of their grandparents.

Though Sornia, who is a winning little lass, of the English type, is but eighteen months of age, she is old enough to appreciate her good fortune in having parents of two such nationalities as England and Russia, for she thereby gets two Christmas holidays! She celebrates her English Christmas on the 25th of December. Then, twelve days after, when she has had ample time to recover from the effects of that celebration, she enjoys the Russian Christmas, which comes January 7.

Rarely will one find a more winsome little felow than the head of the Siamese legation, little three-year-old Vislos Bunnag. True, his father, Prince Prabha, is put down in the diplomatic records as being the Siamese minister to the United States, and he is commonly thought to be the head of the house. But that's a mistake; little Vislos Bunnag is the head—and no ancient ancestor of his ever ruled over Siam—for he is descended from kings—with more autocratic sway than little Vislos rules over the Siamese household, where he does them the honor to play the king.

He looks more like a work of art by some masterhand than a mere three-year-old boy. He is of average height, but is so slender that he appears smaller. His hair is black, that blue-black that reflects a purplish gleam in the sun. His hands are long and slender, not fat and chubby baby hands. They are the hands of an artist, and of one descended from kings as ancestors, for little Vislos' mother, Princess Prabha, is the niece of the late King of Siam.

His face has the dreamy expression of the mind that sees things not given to ordinary mortals to see, reflecting the working of a spirit destined for wonderful things. To look at him is like reading a beautiful poem or listening to entrancing music. Apart from his parentage and lineage, little Vislos would attract attention in any assemblage of children.

Five months ago, when his parents placed him in the Montessori school, he did not know one word of English; now he speaks it as well as the ordinary child of his age. It would take a grown-up five years, instead of five months, to acquire that knowledge. He has a special talent for modeling in clay, although for a long time, he would not touch it, because he thought it was "dirty."

He is most fastidious and dainty and for quite a while refused to take his turn in washing the luncheon dishes at the school, evidently thinking it beneath the dignity of his regal blood.

A striking characteristic is his desire to do things perfectly. He will stand and watch a thing being done a long, long time, never attempting to rush in and try it himself until he has fully mastered it, as other children do. Then, when he has become convinced that he understands it perfectly, he will immediately take hold—and the thing is done with correctness and precision.

The oriental stoicism of his people is developed in him in a marked degree. One day he fell down and skinned his leg so that it bled freely. He jumped up at once and, without a whimper or a tear, exclaimed boldly:

"I don't cry; I beeg boy, I beeg boy!"

As a matter of fact, Vislos is about as big as a Paris doll!

Vislos always wears around his neck a little gold chain, attached to which is a small stone Buddha, inclosed in a gold circlet. The figure is very smooth and has evidently been worn by Vislos' ancestors for many generations. He has a passion for music and learned to sing the "Soldier's Song" before he could master the English words.

* * *

It is a happy and merry little republic of childhood rule that dominates the home of Ambassador and Mme. Romulo S. Naon—five interesting little ones, three girls and two boys. Ambassador Naon represents Argentina and all his children were born there. Of course they all speak Spanish fluently, for that is their native tongue, but it does seem odd to an American child, who is studying Spanish, to hear these five rattling away in a tongue that seems so difficult to it.

Isabel, the eldest daughter, a dark-eyed girl of the Andalusian type, is very fond of theatricals. She recently took a prominent part in a French play given by the society people of Washington. Felicia, the next, is the constant companion of her father and takes the entire responsibility for his comfort upon her slender young shoulders. She recently remarked, with naive frankness: "I wonder how father ever got along without me!"

But she is broad in her affections. When asked her opinion of her father, she replied; "Of course, my father is a great man—but you just ought to see my mother!"

Romulo, the eldest boy, is the poet of the family. When the frenzy of creative genius seizes him he is at its mercy, like Byron or any other poet. He has to halt and put his thoughts in written words upon the first thing that comes to hand. If paper is wanting, then doorsteps or lampposts will do!

John Joseph, the next in years, is the politician and patriot of the family—if one can be called the patriot where all are patriotic. His thoughts are always on his beloved Argentina. His favorite game is war, and he is always the commander-in-chief, as well as the victor, in every battle.

Carlotta, the dark-eyed, curly-haired baby of the family, devotes the time she does not spend in being petted to nursing dolls and dancing the tango—which, by the way, is also a native of Argentina.

* * *

Rahim Khan, the boy, and Mirzieh Khanom, the girl, are the gifted children of Mirza Ali Kull Khan and Mme. Khan of the Persian legation. They are fine specimens of childhood, combining, as they do, the alertness and vivacity of the new world, inherited from their American mother, and the philosophic mentality of the Persian, oldest of the Aryan races, transmitted them by their father.

The son, who is now accompanying his parents on his second visit to Persia, is greatly loved by his father's people in that historic land. He is an accomplished linguist, speaking English, Persian and French with fluency and correctness.

His sister, Mirzieh Khahom, by her cunning and independent little ways, has early shown evidences of developing into a full-blown American girl. She calls herself "plain American Jim Khan," and is delighted when she is mistaken for a boy. Her tastes run to boyish sports and, true to her Persian blood, she is devoted to horses.

The two young sons of Senor Don Joaquin Bernardo Calvo, the Costa Rican minister, Rafael, thirteen, and Louis, eleven years of age, are both handsome, dark-eyed young fellows, with the dignity and bearing of youths very much older. They have spent most of their lives in Washington and are just as "crazy" over athletics—base ball and tennis—as any American boys of their years.

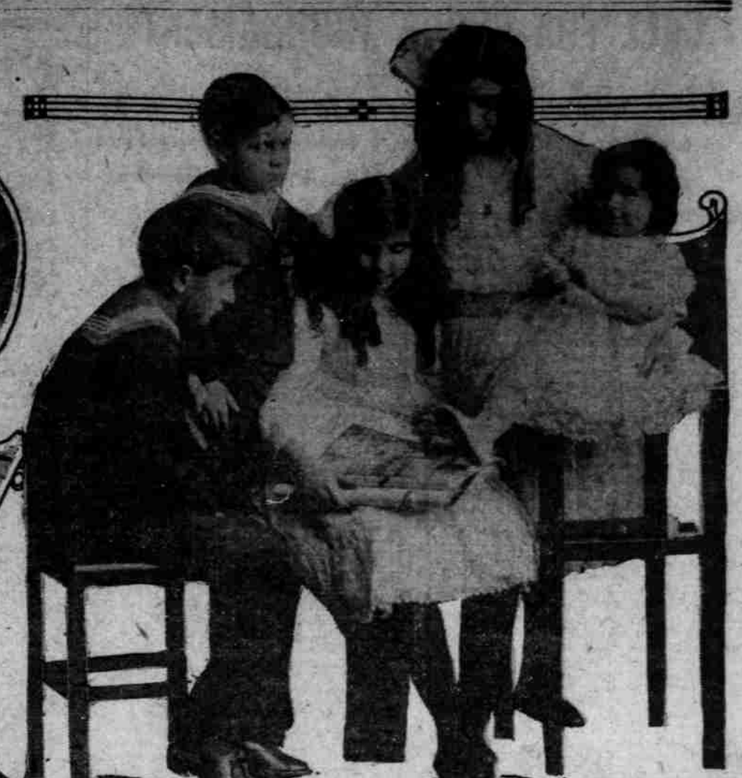
At the public school which they attend they were the leaders in organizing the local base ball team, and Rafael, who is captain, is the leading spirit in all the championship games, having as his ally and coadjutor Julio Reynado, son of the minister of the Dominican republic.

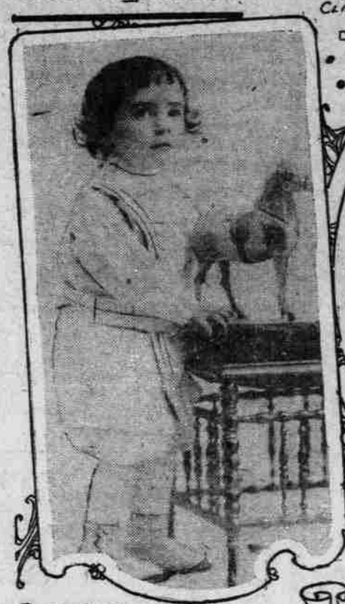
But though devoted with the enthusiasm of youth to outdoor sports, they by no means neglect the literary and artistic. The two boys have organized a dramatic club and last month gave a very creditable performance, which, it may be mentioned as a sidelight upon the boys, netted them a very tidy sum.

Some of the tableaux vivants were "The Death of Benton," "Uncle Sam Spanking Mexico" and "Watchful Waiting." All the characters were garbed picturesquely and correctly.

CHILDREN OF THE CHARGE OF THE PERSIAN LEGATION PHOTO BY CLINEDINST.

CHILDREN OF THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, SIR CECIL ARTHUR SPRING-RICE © EDMONSTON





© TOWLES STUDIO

RENE BALLIVIAN, GRANDSON OF SENOR CALDERON, MINISTER FROM BOLIVIA.

MADAME GOLEJEWSKI AND CHILDREN, SORNIA AND KYRA, WIFE OF MILITARY ATTACHE RUSSIAN EMBASSY

JOSE AVALOS, SON OF MILITARY ATTACHE MEXICAN EMBASSY

CHILDREN OF THE MINISTER AND MME NAON OF ARGENTINA.

MANFRED PORTALES, GRANDSON OF THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR AND COUNTESS VON BERNSTORFF

VISLOS BUNNAG SON OF THE SIAMESE MINISTER. PHOTO BY CLINEDINST.

LUIS CALVO. SON OF THE MINISTER FROM COSTA RICA.

UNDER THE BIG WHITE DOME

Just Like the Brute.

Representative W. J. Cary of Wisconsin was born, at the close of the civil war, in the city of Milwaukee, and he represents his birthplace now. Left an orphan at the age of thirteen, with five younger children on his hands, his life had a gloomy vista, but he did not despair.

The children were placed temporarily in a home conducted by charitable people, while Joseph went to work as a messenger boy. At eighteen he was a telegraph operator and within a year he had gotten a home, placed his brothers and sisters in it and begun to assume the responsibilities of a father.

Cary was once sheriff of his county, and while going about the farms, soliciting the support of the men, was caught one afternoon in a violent storm. So he drove hastily up to the home of an acquaintance, asking shelter for the night.

The farmer's wife—imagine her name was Mrs. Brown—insisted that Cary come in and use one of the guest chambers. Mr. Brown was not at home, having been caught in town by the same storm.

But Cary was a modest man and refused to enter the house in the absence of a masculine host.

"Just givé me a blanket and I can sleep up in the loft," he explained.

The wife insisted that he use a room in the house, but he as ardently refused, so she gave him the blanket and he literally "hit the hay" for a bed.

At dawn he was awakened by hearing a great noise below, and, peeping down through the rafters, he saw the wife belaboring a bull with a spade.

"Get out of here, you brute!" she exclaimed, as she hit the animal a whack on his ribs. "You haven't got any more sense than Joe Cary, for you are just as hard to move!"

On His Way.

Discussing the aimlessness of some negroes, Representative Sisson of Mississippi told the following story the other day:

"An old darky was trudging down the road carrying a big pack. As he passed a little shanty the owner, who was leaning on the gate, called to him:

"'Hey, man,' he yelled, 'whar does you thing you is gwine?'

The old darky paused.

"'I dunno whar I'se gwine,' he replied. 'Whar does you all think I is gwine?'

"'I think you is gwine nowhar,' replied the first.

"'Yas,' said the old darky. 'Dat's whar I'se gwine.'"

So he attended the service and listened, with much interest and edification to a sermon on the text, "Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever."

"That afternoon, being advised to go to another church, famous for its decorations, he found his preacher of the morning occupying the pulpit, and again heard his sermon from the text, "Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever." Though tempted to leave, he stuck it out.

"That evening, as he strolled up the street in search of more frivolous entertainment, he was caught in a crowd, pushing into a great edifice. He had hardly gotten himself comfortably seated when that same preacher climbed into the pulpit and announced as his text, "Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever!"

"'Sufferin' sinners!" ejaculated the lumberman, 'ain't that old lady dead yet?" and clumped disgustedly out of the temple."

Enough Is Enough.

When Representative J. M. C. Smith of Michigan was stumping his district in the last campaign several friends accompanied him. As is usual, he had a speech covering the issues of the day, and this he delivered, practically in the same form at each gathering.

To Mr. Smith, despite the monotony of the address, each fresh audience brought variety. But, as he observed his friends sitting day by day under that same old speech—

"Well, it began to get on my nerves," he confided. "I couldn't but feel, as I say them sitting there, that they were thinking: 'Now, he'll tell that dog story next' or 'I wish he'd get a new twist on that tramp joke for variety.' It must have been mighty flat to them!

"'Boys,' I said to them one night in pity, "I feel for you, having to hear the same old things in the same old way every day, and I won't feel hurt if you do like the lumberman did who went down out of the north woods for his first visit to New York. Arriving late Saturday night, he inquired next morning for the most interesting place to spend the forenoon, and was told that a famous divine from foreign parts was going to preach at a neighboring church.

Fletcherizing.

Miners' memories, says Representative Humphrey of Washington, are wonderful, according to all tradition.

"Two miners," he said the other day, "were plodding back to the Alaskan gold country, with their heavy packs on their backs.

"'That ham and eggs,' said the first, after a long interval of silence, 'that we got at Nome three years ago was great chow.'

"The second miner cogitated over this for about ten miles.

"'Yep,' he agreed, at last. 'But it couldn't touch the steak we had in Frisco back in 89.'"